

DESIGN and ACCESS STATEMENT incorporating Heritage Statement

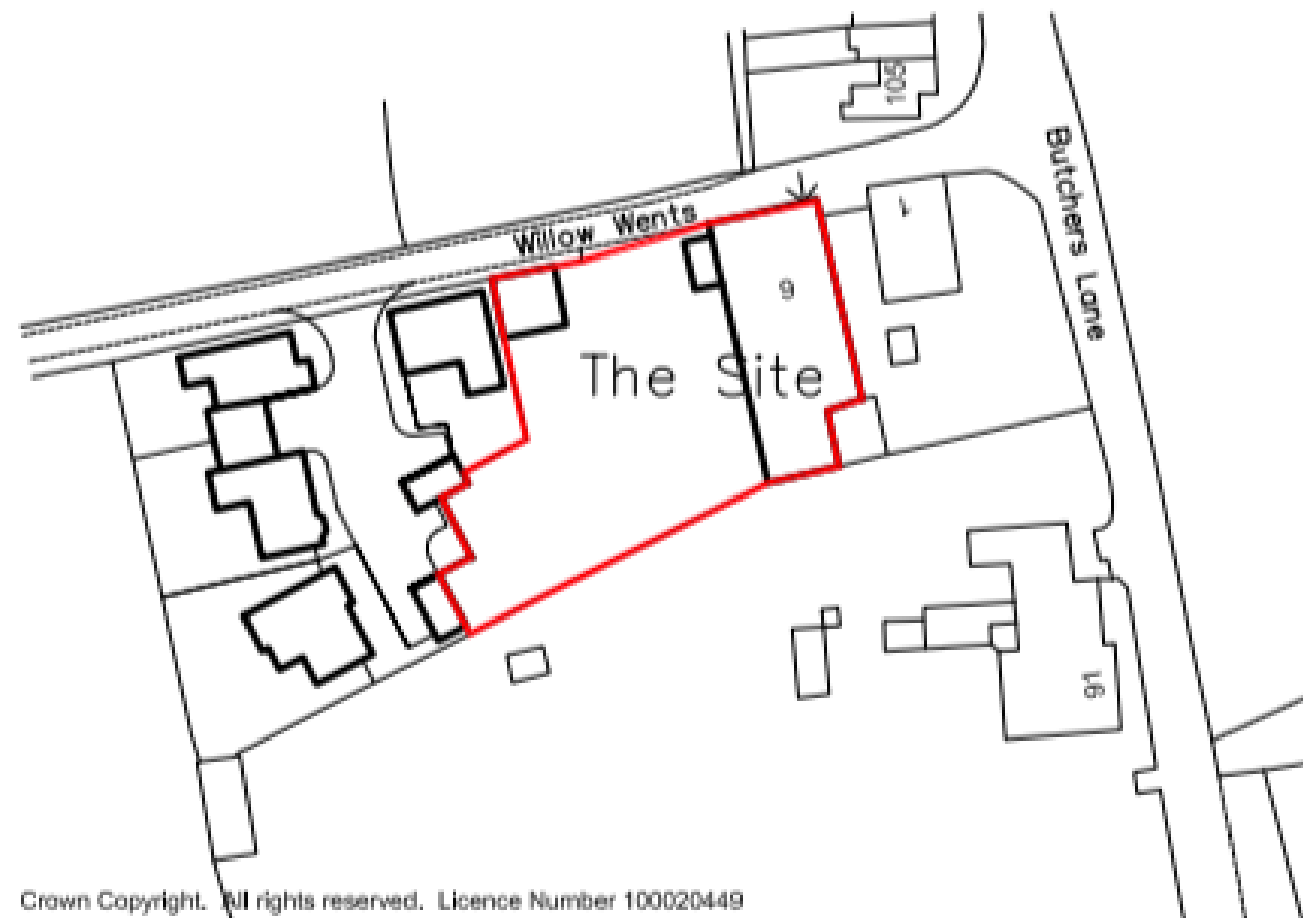
October 2019



Proposed Residential Development
Land at Willow Wents, Mereworth, Kent



KUBE
ARCHITECTURE



Site Location

Proposed Residential Development Land at Willow Wents, Mereworth, Kent

1. INTRODUCTION

This Statement has been prepared by TaD Planning Ltd in support of a detailed planning application for the residential redevelopment of the offices and builders' yard at Willow Wents, Mereworth, Maidstone, comprising the erection of 4 no. houses (2 pairs of semi-detached houses) and a detached double car port.

The application is a revised submission following dismissal of an appeal on 15 May 2019 in respect of an earlier proposal (planning application and appeal references TM/18/00595 and APP/H2265/W/18/3210726 respectively refer) and recent refusal of an alternative proposal (reference TM/19/01784) on 24 September 2019. The application attempts to address the Council's single reason for refusal.

The Design and Access Statement has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 and National Planning Practice Guidance (as revised).

The aim is to explain how the proposed infill development has been revised to address both the Planning Inspector's and Council's concerns and how it continues to be a suitable response to the site and its setting within the settlement boundary of Mereworth. It demonstrates the continued commitment of the applicant and designers to achieving Good Design and meeting the requirements of planning policy, legislation and Good Practice Guidance.

It describes the site and surrounding area, planning policy context and the proposed development.

It describes the design ethos underpinning the revised proposals, considering issues of use, amount, layout, appearance, scale, landscape, access and sustainability and should be read in conjunction with the architect's drawings and supporting information submitted with the planning application.

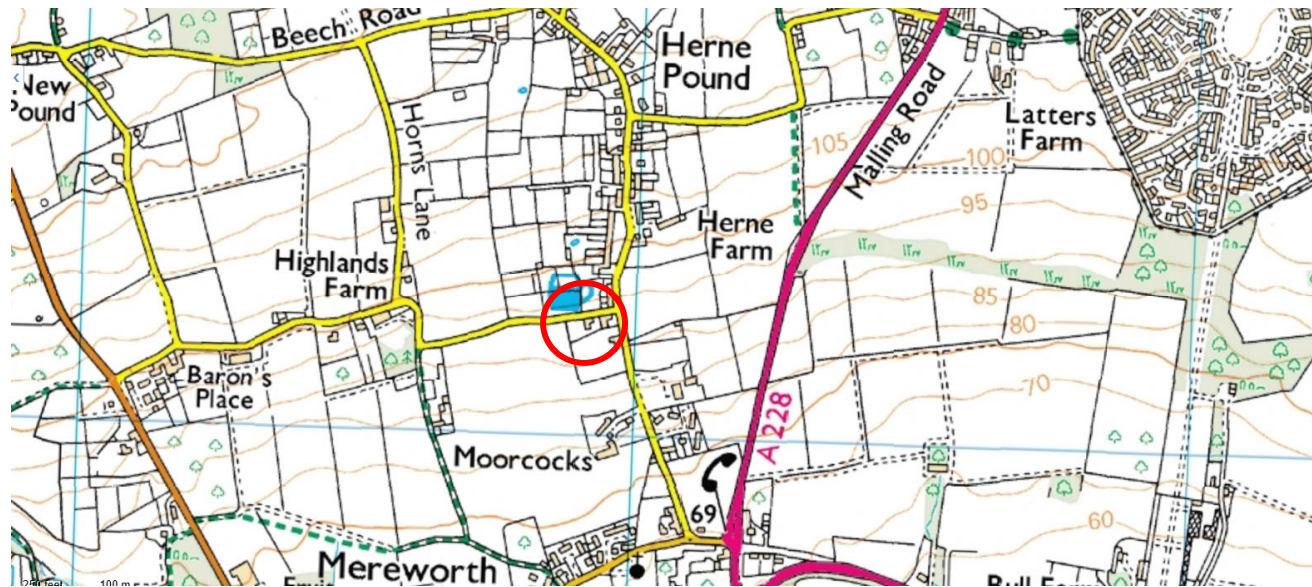
2. SITE AND THE SURROUNDING AREA ASSESSMENT

The site characteristics have not materially changed since the May 2019 appeal decision and September 2019 planning refusal.

The application site is located within the defined settlement boundary of Mereworth, on the southern side of Willow Went approximately 50m to the west of its junction with Butchers Lane. It comprises an irregular shaped parcel of previously developed land in use as a general builder's yard, with covered and open storage, office building and parking.

Immediately west of the site is a small housing development of 4 detached houses and garages, beyond which is open countryside. To the south, the site adjoins the residential curtilage of 91 Butchers Lane, which has a large parking and turning area to the north-eastern corner. The site has the benefit of an existing vehicular/pedestrian access onto Willow Wents, a narrow rural lane. To the north of Willow Wents is an underutilized parcel of garden land and open countryside.

The site is in lawful commercial use as offices and joinery workshop/storage and builders' yard. The office/workshop building is a large rectangular structure with two floors; the ground floor is used as a joinery workshop and builders store, with the upper floor in office use. Its eastern elevation is constructed in brickwork, with the western flank half rendered and half painted horizontal boarding.



Immediately west of the access is a detached brick-built store. The remainder of the site is open and used to store building materials, scaffolding, site portacabins etc.

The land use surrounding the site is residential. Its character and context is derived from the mixed density of existing housing, with the high density traditional terraced houses fronting Butchers Lane, interspersed with lower density housing set in spacious plots. The character and context of the village is rural with a spacious sylvan setting, where the landscape predominates. Buildings in the village are in a variety of architectural styles and ages, with no particular style predominating.

The aerial photograph below is provided to illustrate the built context of the site, however it should be noted that the new housing to the west of the site is not yet shown.



Proposed Residential Development Land at Willow Wents, Mereworth, Kent

Photographs of the application site and surrounding area are set out below:



Existing Office/ Workshop





View Along Willow Wents



View from within site looking towards adjacent housing



View into site from entrance



View of existing store to be retained & no.11 Willow Wents

Proposed Residential Development Land at Willow Wents, Mereworth, Kent

3. PLANNING POLICY

The Planning Policy Framework for the consideration of the revised planning application has not materially changed since the May appeal and September planning decisions.

The Development Plan

The Development Plan comprises:

- Core Strategy 2007
- Development Land Allocations DPD 2008
- Tonbridge Central Area Action Plan 2008
- Managing Development and Environment DPD 2010

On the Proposals Map to the Local Development Framework May 2012 the site is located within the settlement boundary of Mereworth. The office/workshop building lies within the designated Mereworth Conservation Area, with the builder's yard lying outside, but adjoining It lies outside but adjacent to, a designated Conservation Area.

Relevant Core Strategy Policies include:

- CP1 – sustainable development
- CP2 – sustainable transport
- CP13 – minor development within the confines of Mereworth rural settlement
- CP17 – affordable housing provision in rural areas (5 dwellings or more or 1.16ha)
- CP21 – Safeguarding existing employment areas
- CP24 – achieving a high-quality environment
- CP25 – mitigation of development impacts

Relevant MDE DPD Policies include:

- SQ1 – landscape and townscape protection and enhancement
- SQ4 – air quality
- SQ5 – adequate water and sewerage infrastructure
- SQ7 – health and well-being
- SQ8 – road safety, transport and parking
- DC6 – conservation of rural lanes
- CC1 – CC4 – sustainable design and climate change policies

The Council are in the process of preparing a new Local Plan to replace the existing Development Framework and carried out consultations in Autumn 2018. The Council submitted the draft Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate for examination on 23.1.19 (Tonbridge & Malling Borough Local Plan Regulation 22 Submission January 2019). The Examination in Public is currently underway.

Relevant emerging Local Plan Policies include:

- LP1 – presumption in favour of sustainable development
- LP2 – strategic objectives

- LP3 – housing provision
- LP5 – settlement hierarchy
- LP10 – infrastructure requirements
- LP11 – designated areas (includes Conservation Areas)
- LP14 – achieving high quality sustainable design
- LP22 – land contamination
- LP23 – sustainable transport
- LP42 – parking standards
- LP43 – internal space standard (applies to major residential development only)
- LP44 – water efficiency standard (110litres/person/day)

The policies should be afforded weight commensurate with the stage reached in the adoption process.

National Planning Policy Framework February 2019

The appeal decision was made in the light of the February 2019 changes to the NPPF, which were not in force when the Council refused the related planning application.

Government Guidance contained in the NPPF is a material planning consideration to be afforded significant weight in the determination of the planning application. The following guidance is relevant:

- Paragraphs 2 & 47 (*planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise*)
- Paragraph 8 (sustainable development objectives; economic, social and environmental)
- Paragraphs 10 & 11 (presumption in favour of sustainable development)
- Paragraph 12 (presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the Development Plan as the starting point for decision making...)
- Paragraph 38 (local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way... decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible)
- Paragraph 59 (to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay)
- Paragraph 68 (**small and medium sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area. To promote the development of a good mix of sites, LPA's should.... Support development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions, giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes...**)
- Section 8 (Promoting healthy and safe communities)

Proposed Residential Development Land at Willow Wents, Mereworth, Kent

- Section 9 (promoting sustainable transport)
- Paragraph 117 (**planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions**)
- Paragraph 118 (**planning policies and decisions should.... Give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes... promote and support development of under-utilised land and buildings if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained, and available site could be used more effectively...**)
- Paragraphs 122 and 123 (**support development that makes efficient use of land; avoid homes being built at low densities and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site, where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified needs....**)
- Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places)
- Paragraph 127 (f) (create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience)
- Footnote 46 (Planning policies for housing should make use of the Government's optional technical standards for accessible and adaptable housing, where this would address an identified need for such properties. Policies may also make use of the nationally described space standard, where the need for an internal space standard can be justified)
- Section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment)

Supplementary Planning Documents

The proposal has been formulated with regard to the following Supplementary Planning Documents and good practice guidance:

- Kent Design
- By Design (CABE/DETR 2001)
- Places, Streets and Movement (DETR 2001)
- Protecting Design Quality in Planning (CABE)
- Secured by Design New Homes 2017

An assessment of the proposed development against the above planning policy framework will be provided in the Planning Statement.

Proposed Residential Development Land at Willow Wents, Mereworth, Kent

4. EVALUATION

Housing Land Supply

The Council cannot currently demonstrate a 5 Year Housing Land Supply.

In accordance with Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF, '*relevant policies which are most important for determining the application are now out-of-date* (footnote 7 refers)'.

As such, planning permission should be granted unless:

'i. the application of policies in this framework (rather than those in the Development Plan) that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed (footnote 6 includes habitats sites, SSSIs, Green Belt land, Local Green Space, AONBs, National Parks, Heritage Coast, irreplaceable habitats, designated heritage assets and areas at risk of flooding); none of these apply to the application site;

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.'

The revised proposals have been developed in cognizance of the original detailed appraisal of the site and surrounding area, focusing on the established townscape, pattern of development, land-uses and prevalent architecture in the area; assessment of the opportunities and constraints and the Council's aspirations for providing additional housing, in lieu of its current shortfall, together with the Council's Strategic Objective 1 in the emerging Local Plan (delivery of new homes).

The revised proposals have been devised to address the May 2019 appeal decision and the September 2019 planning refusal.

Opportunities and Constraints

The revised development has been carefully and sensitively conceived in cognizance of the planning history, previous detailed assessment of the site and surrounding area and having regard to identified opportunities and constraints.

Opportunities

- Both the Council and the Planning Inspector accept the following material planning considerations which remain relevant and weigh heavily in favour of the revised scheme: principle of residential development; sustainable development; preservation of designated Heritage assets (Mereworth Conservation Area and setting of Herne Cottage, a Grade II listed building); size, scale, height & siting of units 2, 3 & 4, having regard to removal of existing office block which is greater in size; acceptable design; acceptable standard of residential accommodation; highways and car parking; residential amenities of neighbouring properties with the exception of no. 11 Willow Wents; no loss of privacy to no. 11 Willow Wents; no loss of daylight or sunlight to no. 11 Willow Wents; density of development; no requirement for affordable housing

- Site has a lawful commercial use for offices/workshop/storage and builders' yard, which is now sandwiched between residential development on 3 sides which is somewhat at odds with the land uses in the area; site is a small infill plot between existing built development
- Permitted development rights exist for conversion of the existing offices to residential (Class O of the Order)
- Previously developed land
- Site is located within the defined settlement boundary for Mereworth where the principle of new residential development is acceptable in principle & consistent with aims of government and local policy
- Site adjoins housing on 3 sides with a recently completed housing development immediately west
- Existing vehicular/pedestrian access with long-standing commercial use
- Characteristics of the site and surrounding area
- Southerly orientation of the site

Constraints

- Need to preserve the outlook from the rear-facing living room, dining room & half landing windows of no. 11 Willow Wents



Proposed Block Plan

Proposed Residential Development Land at Willow Wents, Mereworth, Kent

5. STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Neither the Council nor the Planning Inspectorate refused the previous scheme on any heritage considerations.

Notwithstanding this, the revised proposal has the continued support of a Statement of Heritage Significance.

Assessment of Heritage Significance

Para 189 National Planning Policy Framework:

'In determining applications, Local Planning Authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and where necessary a field evaluation.'

Significance is defined as the *'value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic.'*

The following resources have been used to assess the significance of the CA:

- Historical Maps
- Kent Historic Environment Record
- BS Standard 7913 (Guide to Conservation of Heritage Buildings(2013))

Designated Heritage Assets

This Statement relates to two designated heritage assets:

- Mereworth Conservation Area (Butchers Lane), the extent of which is illustrated on the Council's LDF Proposals Map (designated on 6 June 1993): local value
- Setting of Herne Cottage - Grade II listed building: local value

Mereworth Conservation Area

Very little information exists about the Conservation Area and the Council has not yet written the CA Character Area Appraisal.

The Conservation Area was first designated in June 1993.

The boundary to the CA cuts through the site, with the western half falling outside and the office/workshop building falling inside.

The architectural style within the CA is an eclectic mix of Kentish vernacular, with a variety of materials including brick, tile hanging and painted/natural weatherboarding.

The setting of the CA is the surrounding landscape and the existing builders yard, which has been covered by a variety of buildings and structures since the late 1800s.

The application has the support of a set of historical maps (1871-1890, 1897-1900 and 1907-1923) and photograph of Herne House which shows a 3 kiln oast house at the site. The historic map dated 1929-1952 shows a larger and different shaped building at the site. The original oast house burnt down prior to 1929 and the existing structure is a replacement to that which existed in earlier times. There are no remains of the circular oasts visible in the current building, as the submitted set of photographs show.

The applicant bought the property in 1982 and has subsequently made significant changes to it, including a dual pitched roof, fenestration and elevational changes. These changes are illustrated on the submitted photographs. Planning consent was granted on 2 February 1999 for alterations and conversion of the existing first floor storage area to B1 office space, with no mention of the building having any historic significance or making any special contribution to the Conservation Area (designated in 1993).

The Kent Historic Environment Record does record the site as a *'farmstead adjacent to Herne Cottage'* of post medieval age (1800AD-1880AD). It describes the type of farmstead as *'loose courtyard with working agricultural buildings on 3 sides and with additional detached elements to the main plan'*. This is clearly illustrated on the earlier historic maps, however this is not the situation today. There are no *'working agricultural buildings'* adjoining the site and haven't been for a significant period of time.

The KHER also records that the farmstead is *'altered, with a significant loss of original form; more than 50%'*. The original farmstead has been further altered by the recent housing development to the west and the extant planning consent for a second B1 office building within the existing builder's yard (reference TM/08/00154 refers).

The submitted Conservation Area Appraisal does not make any mention of the existing structure or others within the builder's yard. Furthermore, and significantly, there is no mention of the site and Herne Cottage forming part of the historic farmstead.

It is concluded that the existing building cannot reasonably be described as a *'non-designated heritage asset'*. It has little, if any, historic status being a replacement of the earlier oast house. Its contribution to local significance is also limited, having been much altered since its original construction, making it very difficult to decipher as a *'historic farm building'*.

Herne Cottage

Herne Cottage is a Grade II listed building. It lies immediately east of the existing office building, the eastern flank wall of which forms the boundary between the two properties.

Proposed Residential Development Land at Willow Wents, Mereworth, Kent

The Statutory list description contains the following information:

GVII

Cottage. C18. Coursed stone blocks with flint galletting and red brick quoins and window dressings. Plain tiled roof with 1 dormer and catslide to rear. 2 storeys, 4 windows, C19 easements. Central coupled doors with flat hood arm.

Listing NGR : TQ6599854358

Assessment of Impact

Paras 132 to 134 of the NPPF provide guidance in judging the potential harm to heritage assets in the development management process.

Para 132 states:

'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.'

The judgement to be made is whether or not the proposed development would give rise to any *'harm'* to the designated heritage assets as referred to above and if so, whether it would be *'substantial'* or *'less than substantial'*.

Para 137 NPPF asks Local Planning Authorities to *'look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.'*

None of the existing buildings are listed. The office/workshop has little, if any heritage value and contributes little to the character and appearance of the wider CA; arguably, it detracts. It cannot, for reasons outlined earlier, be regarded as a non-designated heritage asset. Its demolition will create an opportunity to enhance the CA with an appropriately designed small-scale housing development.

As such the impact of the proposed development on the CA is low (less than substantial), with a negligible impact of change.

The proposal does not directly impact on Herne Cottage. Its setting will be greatly enhanced by the removal of the large bulk of the office/workshop building, providing an improved outlook and light levels.

Mitigation

The proposed development has been designed with sensitivity to the designated Heritage Assets and does not reduce their significance or heritage interest.

The scale of the new development is appropriate, as is the design.

Materials are referenced later in this Statement and samples can be conditioned.

Heritage Statement Conclusion

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in accordance with the NPPF.

Neither the Council nor the Planning Inspectorate refused the previous scheme on any heritage considerations.

The Statement describes the significance of the heritage assets likely to be affected by the proposed development.

The level of detail provided is proportionate to the asset's importance and in recognition of the allocation of the site for housing in the Development Plan. As such it is considered sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the significance of the identified heritage assets.

The proposals do not lead to substantial/less than substantial harm to or total loss of significance of the identified heritage assets.



View of rear Office/ Workshop



Herne Cottage



View along Butchers Lane

Proposed Residential Development Land at Willow Wents, Mereworth, Kent

5. DESIGN PRINCIPLES

5.1 Use

Residential redevelopment of the existing lawful commercial site, comprising 4 no. houses in 2 semi-detached pairs and a detached double car port.

5.2 Amount of Development

Site Area: 0.11 ha

Density: 36dph (this is compatible with the density of the adjoining housing development which was built at a density of approximately 40dph). The density of development was not at issue in the refused scheme.

The existing office/workshop building will be demolished.

4 no. houses and a detached double car port are proposed.

All the houses have 3 no. bedrooms, with accommodation extending to GIA 99sq.m (1065sq.ft).

5.3 Layout

Site Layout

The revised site layout is illustrated on the architectural drawings.

The revised layout has been designed to address the Council's and Planning Inspector's concerns about the relationship of new houses to no. 11 Willow Wents and aims to continue to meet the objectives of Good Design. The revised layout has been informed by the site characteristics, layout of the adjoining development, proximity of Herne Cottage to the east, identified opportunities and constraints.

The revised layout is notably different from the refused scheme in respect of the land adjoining the rear garden of no. 11 and incorporates the following key concepts:

- Demolition of existing office/workshop building
- Retention and re-use of the existing access onto Willow Wents
- Retention of the small brick-built storage building and re-use as a carport
- Siting the 2 pairs of semi-detached houses in the eastern half of the site, partly over the footprint of the existing office/workshop building. In this position the houses are compatible with the pattern of development in the surrounding area and particularly the new residential development to the west

- Double car port of significantly smaller proportions than the refused bungalow/house of previous schemes and car ports on the adjoining housing development, sited against the western boundary, creating an open vista/outlook from no. 11 across the site and beyond; car port and adjacent parking spaces dedicated to units 3 and 4
- Less site coverage by buildings and greater open landscaped spaces
- All houses front the new cul de sac, similar to the existing development to the west
- Parking and turning to KCC standards
- Spacing between the new and neighbouring houses to preserve privacy and avoid undue overshadowing
- Appropriately sized, useable gardens



Proposed Residential Development Land at Willow Wents, Mereworth, Kent

Internal Layout

The internal layout of the new homes is illustrated on the architectural drawings.

The layouts combine contemporary open plan living spaces with more traditional bedrooms with ensuite facilities. The accommodation is spacious and attractive, providing flexible living spaces.



Proposed Floor Layouts

5.4 Scale

The scale of the revised development is illustrated on our drawings.

The proposed houses are identical in size and scale to the previous schemes, which were considered acceptable by both the Council and Planning Inspector.

Unit 1 in the refused schemes has been replaced by a significantly smaller car port.

Street elevation drawings are provided to show the buildings in context.

Cross-section drawings are provided to show the relationship of the car port with no. 11 Willow Wents.

Proposed Residential Development Land at Willow Wents, Mereworth, Kent

Particular regard has been given to the scale of adjoining buildings, including Herne Cottage and the new residential development to the west, particularly no. 11.

The scheme will add variety in the size, scale and height of housing in Butchers Lane, whilst adding interest from longer distant views. The footprint and site coverage of the individual houses has been improved in the current scheme, and the size of the individual plots is acceptable and compatible with the pattern of development in the immediate area.

5.5 Landscaping

The open storage of builder's materials within the heart of the site dominates its character and setting of neighbouring properties. The site has minimal planting, save for a landscaped southern edge alongside a brick boundary wall, which is both proposed to be retained.

Part of the eastern external wall of the existing office building will be retained as a garden wall.

New planting is proposed within the front and rear gardens, entrance to the site and along the boundary with no. 11, providing a softer framework for the new houses, sympathetic to its rural setting. The site offers the potential for domestic planting within each individual curtilage and it is anticipated that the finer hard and soft landscape details will be conditioned.

5.6 Appearance

The appearance of the new housing development is illustrated on the architectural drawings.

The style of architecture has been drawn from the character of the surrounding built environment, which contains an eclectic mix of traditional vernacular architecture. The style of the new housing development adjoining the western boundary to the site has had a strong influence on the design and material choices.

The design has only marginally changed, with the introduction of barn hip roofs, instead of the full gables on the previous schemes.

The aim is to create a development whose design harmonises with its setting, drawing inspiration from the buildings and layout which characterise the Conservation Area.

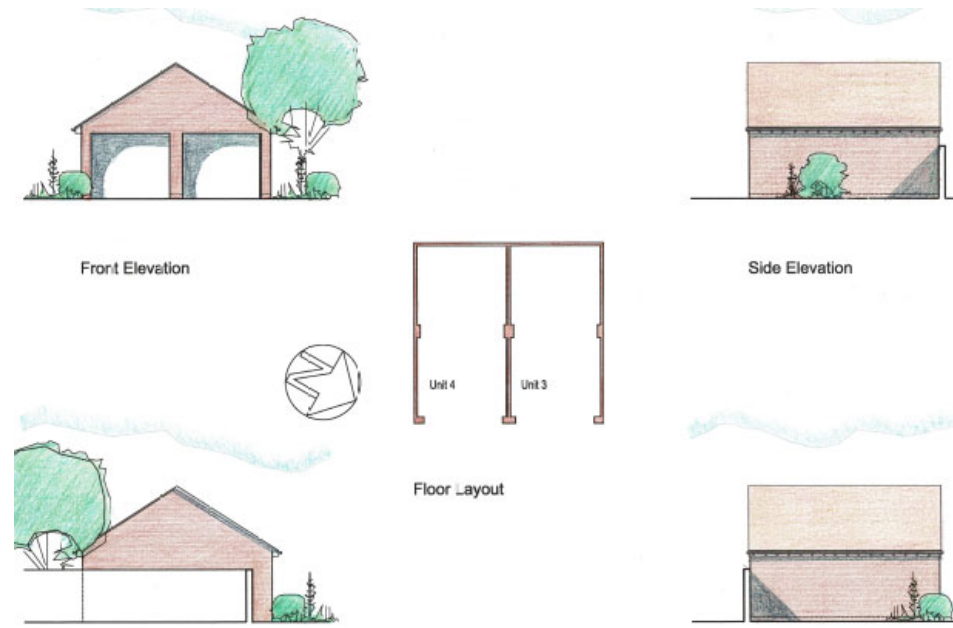
The houses have been individually designed to create uniformity of house style, which people want to buy and live in.

The elevations are unchanged.

The house designs incorporate attractive traditional detailing:

- Fully hipped pitched roofs to the new houses
- Small traditional flat roofed dormer windows in rear catslide roofs
- Traditional fenestration pattern and style, with contemporary wrap-around glazing to the rear elevations
- Bay windows
- Monopitch roof across front elevation, providing covered entrance area

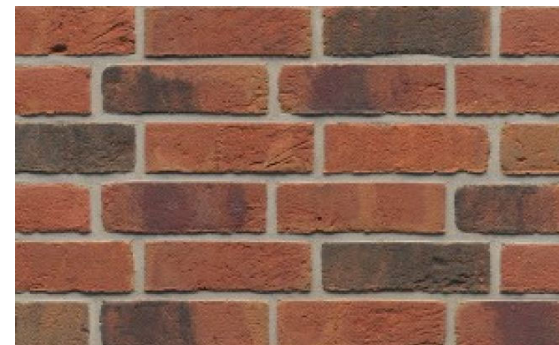
- Car port designed in a simple functional style with gable pitched roof



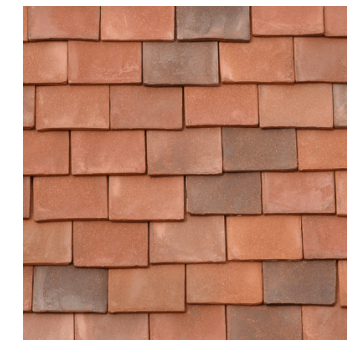
5.7 Materials

It is proposed to use a palette of traditional materials which complement the materials found on neighbouring properties:

- Multi red facing brickwork.
- Red plain clay tiling hanging to Units 3 & 4.
- Black stained timber boarding to Unit 1.
- Hardwood front doors.
- Timber painted secondary doors and casement windows.
- Black UPVC rainwater goods.
- Plain clay tiles to roofs.



Facing Brickwork



Tiling Hanging



Roof tiles

Proposed Residential Development Land at Willow Wents, Mereworth, Kent

5.8 Crime Prevention

Designing in crime prevention measures has been informed by Secured by Design Principles (Secured by Design New Homes 2016) and the requirements of the Building Regulations in this regard:

- Maximum surveillance of the street and individual gardens, including parking area.
- Secure points of entry to the houses with doors and windows fitted with secure locking systems.
- Secure rear gardens.

The proposals are designed to meet building regulations in this respect.

5.8 Sustainable Design and Construction Assessment

The Planning Statement sets out how the proposed development meets the three dimensions to Sustainable Development at Paragraph 8 NPPF; economic, social and environmental.

The need to provide a high degree of sustainable construction and energy conservation has influenced the design to some degree, with the objective to make the new development energy efficient. The proposed design will meet sustainable methods of construction in the Building Regulations.

This approach will result in residences that consume reduced amounts of energy, resulting in benefits for the environment through reduced greenhouse gas emissions and better adaptation to climate change.

The project will demonstrate methods employed to achieve reduction in water consumption and will include:

- Dual flush toilets
- Low water use spray or aerated taps
- Water saving white goods
- Installation of garden water butts.

Energy consumption / efficiency is a factor in sustainable developments. Measures adopted in order to achieve low energy use will include:-

- Maximising natural light
- The use of mechanical and electrical equipment such as condensing boilers, low energy lighting lamps etc. to minimize energy use.
- External light fittings will be operated by a daylight sensor and passive infra red movement detectors to limit light pollution and again minimize energy use.
- The use of insulation with high thermal performance.

Embodied energy has been considered when choosing materials to be used to create a healthy, comfortable building with a low impact upon the environment. Measures that will be encouraged will be:

- Use of materials of low embodied energy

- Use of materials from sustainable sources including recycled materials
- Use of non oil based products
- Ability to re-use and recycle materials at the end of the building life.

6 ACCESSIBILITY

The site has the benefit of an existing vehicular/pedestrian access, which has been used for a considerable length of time for commercial vehicles in association with the builders yard.

Both the Council and the Planning Inspector considered the use of the access to serve a residential development acceptable.

The application site is as accessible to local services and facilities and alternative modes of travel, as existing housing in the rural settlement.

The design seeks to achieve an inclusive and accessible design for future residents and visitors.

The new development will be constructed to provide access for persons with disabilities in accordance with the requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations. All parking surfacing and paths will be constructed of a firm and even material. Footpaths to the main entrance doors within the site will be a minimum of 900mm wide and have a stepped approach in accordance with Approved Document M of the Building Regulations.

Cloakroom – The dwelling will be provided with a cloakroom on the entrance storey designed in accordance with the guidance for cloakrooms in Approved Document M of the Building Regulations. Room entrance door will open outwards and will be positioned to enable wheelchair users to access the WC.

Electrical Switches and Sockets - Socket outlets are to be positioned 450mm from finished floor level to bottom edge of socket with light switches positioned 1200mm from finished floor level to top of switch.

7 CONCLUSION

This Design, Access and Heritage Statement accompanies a revised planning application for the residential redevelopment of the existing lawful builders' yard at Willow Wents, Mereworth. The site is previously developed land, lying within the defined settlement boundary of Mereworth.

The proposals have been redesigned to address the May 2019 appeal decision September 2019 Planning Refusal and have been informed by a detailed assessment of the character of the area, opportunities and constraints, including policies in the Development Plan and NPPF.

The revised scheme satisfactorily addresses the concerns about the relationship of built development with no. 11 Willow Wents, by placing all the houses in the eastern half of the site and only siting a small double car port adjacent to its southern boundary. The new scheme retains all those elements which both the Council and the Planning Inspector considered acceptable.

Proposed Residential Development Land at Willow Wents, Mereworth, Kent

The proposed development will not unacceptably impact upon the outlook of the rear-facing living rooms of no. 11 and will not be overbearing or create an unacceptable sense of enclosure.

The development offers the opportunity to make efficient use of the land with a small-scale housing development, which will improve the visual amenities of the site and residential amenities of adjoining properties.

The proposals provide for high quality housing in a sustainable location and will make a useful contribution to the housing supply in the local area, which is a significant benefit. There are no disbenefits which outweigh this.

This Design, Access and Heritage Statement concludes that the proposals are fully acceptable in design and access terms.

Proposed Residential Development Land at Willow Wents, Mereworth, Kent